

# The Relation of Apperception to Literature

IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

By

ELLA CONNET.

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The subject of this paper, The Relation of Apperception to Literature in the Public School, is one that might well engage the thought and pen of some of the best thinkers in the educational world. And the writer's only excuse for presuming to discuss it is a recognition of its importance to the multitude of young people in our schools today and the multitudes that are to follow them. The purpose of the paper is not to make an exhaustive discussion of the subject, but only to state as clearly and simply as possible a few of what seem to the author the leading thoughts in connection with it.

The purpose of the public school will occupy our attention first and then the separate subjects of Apperception and Literature in order to see the relation of apperception to literature in the public school.

## THE PURPOSE OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOL.

The fact that our public schools exist as a state institution indicates their purpose,- that of fitting the youth of the country for citizenship and for private life, in as far as private life affects the state.

As to the exact statement of what that preparation should be, those who are at once practical men, earnest thinkers, and able citizens, do not agree. On the one hand it is claimed that mental vigor is the one essential result to be sought in all school work, while knowledge is power is the motto of another class. Still a third and growing class takes a more advanced position. While this last class holds that the proper office of the school is both to give useful information and to develop mental vigor, they consider that the work of the school is not completed short of a well-developed, symmetrical character.

Now the state is but the sum total of the citizens and her measures express the ideas of the majority of her members, hence the intelligence and character of her citizens is a matter of vital importance to the state,- her good and that of the individual are synonymous.

There is little room to question the propriety of making the school a place for gaining useful information. That information,

however, need not be useful in the utilitarian sense, so it has a broad culture value and forms the foundation for future knowledge. For ideas are the individual's interpretation of the world around and within him, and on their accuracy and extent depend his usefulness as a student, as a business or professional man, or as a member of society. Economy of time and energy also demands that the material which is used to discipline the mind should have a knowledge value as well. Therefore the first aim, as stated by this third class, namely, - that the school should give useful information, is seen to be essential.

Turning now to the other aim of this class, - that of character formation, let us see what the aim means. At first the idea seems somewhat indefinite and the task impracticable, however desirable it may be in theory. But a study of the different elements of character will serve to define the idea more clearly and to render the task of forming well rounded characters, more simple.

Some one has defined character as "thought crystallized into action through choice." Thus in character building two forces are seen to operate, the one an active, responsible, personal power and the other, ideas (in any field of thought) from which to choose. These forces continually act and react upon each other, and their result, at any time, constitutes what we call character. Consequently character is not fixed, but is constantly being changed by ideas



both directly and indirectly. The indirect effect of ideas comes through their exercise or suppression of native tendency. Every choice involves the intellect, the emotions and the will. The intellect knows and thinks, the emotional faculties feel, and the will chooses between the courses of action presented by the intellect which has been influenced by the emotions. Therefore, though all are essential, that which determines the choice is at the source of action, and is the prime force in character formation. Now the feelings furnish the motive to the will, and activity will be aroused and controlled by them. The emotions include the æsthetic and ethical faculties. AEsthetic sensations are aroused by beauty and harmony and are refining in their effect, while the ethical faculties deal with questions of duty and furnish the highest reliable motives for action, subordinating and controlling all other motives. Hence the conclusion that the æsthetic side of character is essential, while the moral side requires the first consideration.

But it has been objected that, while moral training is most important, it belongs to the home and church and not to the school, except incidentally. It is claimed to be impossible to make moral training a part of the work in American schools, since religious freedom is one of the fundamental principles of our government. True religious teaching is out of the question. Moral training, however, is not religious teaching; but it is the inculcation of those

cardinal principles of action sanctioned by all good citizens, of whatever faith, without tracing them to their ultimate source in religion or philosophy.

That this is no Utopian idea but a real practical one is proven by facts. The newspaper constantly reminds us that the most successful and evasive criminals are men of brains, but devoid of moral principle, their superior mental power only adding to their capacity for crime. The banker who has been robbed is not concerned so much about the skill exhibited as the character that permitted the act. And the real idea of the teacher, to whatever of the three above named classes he professes to belong, is seen in his practice. To him a lie or an oath is a far more serious offense than a failure in a recitation. Again, any worthy parent would prefer to see his son grow into a worthy, industrious citizen, on a comparatively low mental plane, than into a brilliant knave. Thus the good of the state demands the moral standard for school work; while the business man, the teacher, and the parent bear testimony to the necessity for it.

This moral purpose of the school need not always be apparent, in fact the highest good may be missed by a too constant reference to it; still it must be the underlying principle determining both the material and methods of educational work. And further, it strengthens the other purposes of the school rather than supplants them.

Now the first two classes of educators mentioned would not un-

dervalue character formation or leave unused any recognized legitimate means to that end, yet they lose sight of the part that ideas play in character building. They fail to remember that while ideas are the proper mental food of the pupil, or make up his stock of information, they develop the other sides of his character. They seem to forget that the same material and methods of instruction, whether we plan for it or not, do serve not only to strengthen or enervate the mind and to store it with information, but also to refine or dull the sensibilities, and to develop the moral character in one direction or the other,- that is, they forget that moral character is largely the necessary result of education and consequently demands the educator's attention. The highest attainment or greatest usefulness of the citizen is not secured when part of his faculties remain comparatively inactive, hence the plea for developing the character symmetrically in the school.

To sum up, then, the third class mentioned, namely, the Herbartians, hold that the proper work of the school is to give useful information and to develop symmetrical characters with the moral idea as the fundamental one. This claim, we see rests on correct theory and is supported by public opinion.



## APPERCEPTION.

The subject of apperception will be considered as to its nature, requisite conditions, and relation to school work.

Man enters the world a stranger to it and to himself as well. His means of becoming acquainted with his surroundings is a self-active mind, which receives its impressions from the outer world through the five senses. To prove this fact note the aimless movements, the vacant look, and the slow progress of the very little child. The first impressions made upon his mind are strange and new. He cannot guess much of their significance to himself, but he does know whether or not they please him and is satisfied to simply contemplate the attractive ones and to turn from or try to escape the unpleasant ones. His senses are giving him impressions, - he is perceiving.

But were this the process throughout life, mental progress would be impossible. Fortunately these perceptions become the means of interpreting the new impressions. But will he not receive the information naturally and without effort on his part? Is not his mind a mirror reflecting the outer world, or a photograph gallery filled with pictures of all that has come under his observation? A moment's thought reveals the falsity of this idea. We are all seeing and hearing thousands of things that we can not recall. We are even un-



conscious that they were ever within the range of our eyes or ears. To illustrate, I am aroused by a thunder storm, but fall asleep again. The wind roars, the thunder peals, and the raindrops beat against the window-pane; but I retain no impression of the remainder of the storm. My sense organs were responsive and the impression made upon them is shown by my first waking. But because I had no feeling in connection with it, stronger than my weariness, my mind ceased to respond to the sensations,- I fell asleep. Our observation then leads to the conclusion that in receiving information the mental and emotional faculties are active. For only a living force, the soul, can transform the physical phenomena of sense excitation into the psychical product called ideas. This spiritual activity, just as physical strength, is a birthright and may be increased by exercise or decreased by inactivity.

Returning now to the example of the thunder storm, How was it that I knew the sound was thunder? The reason is not far to seek. Had I never heard thunder and had I been familiar with the noise of the earthquake, I would have called it the latter, just as, when I did hear the rumbling of an earthquake for the first time, I called the sound thunder and attributed the motion to another cause. I was simply interpreting the new experience by what I had already had. It was all I could do. This principle, of interpreting the new impression by means of old ideas, is recognized by people in all de-

partments of life. When Christ wished to teach the Father's care he said "Behold the birds of heaven, that they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; and your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not ye of much more value than they?" The public speaker constantly employs illustrations from the experience of his audience. Or a listener, unacquainted with the topic of conversation, remarks, "I do not know enough about the subject to understand what I hear."

But the present stock of ideas does even more than tell what the new sensation means. Two persons, one an artist and the other a boor, are looking at the "Angelus." To the one it is a work of marvelous beauty and skill. Every line and tint has a meaning for him. The picture is a perfect, harmonious whole, as a work of art, having a deep spiritual meaning. To the other it is merely a few peasants, a little stretch of ground and a church in the distance, pleasing him perhaps yet, on the whole, voted a very ordinary picture. And very different are the ideas received by a botanist and poet from the same landscape, each attending to and retaining only a part of the impressions and modifying these according to his former ideas. So the same object may not produce the same result in different minds, but there may be as many different ideas of it as there are minds impressed by it.

On looking at my brother's picture there is nothing actually before my eye but a piece of cardboard with a few lines and some lights

and shadows, yet my brother stands before my mind's eye erect and tall, with brown eyes and hair. I almost hear his voice and feel his touch, for my mind has enlarged and filled out the outlines of the picture. So in gaining ideas the new impression is interpreted, modified, and enlarged by the old ideas.

As to the effect of the new upon the old, each new impression must enlarge and modify the old stock. It even seems to interpret the old, in many cases, such, for instance, as the conversion of Paul. Here the new idea, diametrically opposed to his former belief, takes such complete possession of him as to revolutionize his whole life. His convictions on one important point are changed--he has found a new center for his religious thought; but Paul, the bold, earnest, faithful Christian is essentially the same man as Saul, the zealous, energetic, conscientious Jew. And the new has become a corrective rather than an interpreter of the old ideas; for it is received and adjusted by that which was already in the mind as seen in the same characteristics of the man before and after his conversion.

To sum up,- the soul in gaining knowledge, is active and the ideas in it interpret, modify and enlarge the new impressions, and in turn are modified, enlarged and corrected by them; ideas are the result of experience both mental and emotional and vary with the individual as a result of natural tendency and experience. Consequently ideas can never be communicated by means of words--their signs,



unless those signs call up some past experience actual or imagined. They mean only so much to any one as he can out of his own life, put into them.

Yet experience and the understanding of a fact are not sufficient to make it most useful. This is shown by the oft repeated confession, "I knew that, if I had only thought." The idea must become so closely related to similar ideas that one calls up the other and these associations must be made in many directions, so that the idea forms a part of many thoughts. Further, these thoughts must be associated with others making thought-complexes in the form of general notions, rules, or principles. Not till the idea is thus associated has it reached a high degree of usefulness. To illustrate,- the name nautilus brings up the idea first of a creature having a coiled external shell with numerous partitions across the hollow part, forming chambers, the outer one being the creature's home. This idea calls up the whole family of living cephalopods. From them the mind goes back to geological ages recalling many forms now extinct, but once very abundant, some having a straight shell, others coiled like the pearly nautilus, some having partitions similar to it, others not. Or again, Holmes' beautiful little poem is recalled and with him we say--

'This is the ship of pearl which  
poets feign  
Sailed the unshadowed main'

and so on through, till with the poet one exclaims:-

'Thanks for the heavenly message brought by thee.

Child of the wandering sea'---

'Through the deep caves of thought I hear a  
voice that sings,-

Build the more stately mansions, O my soul,  
As the swift seasons roll!

Leave thy low vaulted past!

Let each new temple, nobler than the last,  
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,

Till thou at length art free,

Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's  
unresting sea!'

The nautilus is no longer merely an individual animal; but a member of a large class of animals, some living and some extinct, between which it forms the connecting link. The name is also associated with one of the most beautiful and inspiring poems, and the mention of either suggests the other. Now a new thought related to either will be associated with the other also.

"This psychical activity by which percepts, ideas, and idea-complexes are brought into relation to our previous intellectual and emotional life, assimilated with it, and thus raised to greater clearness, activity and significance is apperception,"<sup>#</sup> or mental assimi-

<sup>#</sup> "Apperception" Lange.

lation. This psychical activity, however, is not only an energy, but includes as well the conditions and results of consciousness. It is the activity of a conscious soul accompanied by the union of new ideas with older and richer related thought. It results in knowledge and "signifies an elevation of feeling and effort, the apprehension of a new psychical product through the emotions." It is the process by which the soul grows. Let us consider a moment the characteristics that predominate at different stages in the development of this spiritual life.

The little child lives almost exclusively in the material world, judging things outside himself by his own physical experiences. To him even inanimate objects have the powers of thought, speech and motion. Physical laws, such as time and space, are disregarded in his thought, - experience has not yet taught him these laws. He observes superficially and his generalizations lack accuracy and completeness. His eye is attracted by brilliancy of color rather than by harmony, nor does lack of proportion disturb him. His motives are almost wholly sensuous, reason having little weight with him. A thing is good or bad in proportion as it pleases or displeases him. His moral notions exist in the concrete form of ideals rather than in that of abstract principles. These ideals are his parents and teachers, who appeal to him through the sense of love, fear, or dependence, yet, because associated with ethical personalities, they have a higher



ethical value. It is through these ideals he gains his first notions of obligation to human and divine authority, of duty, and of the higher spiritual life. These characteristics run through the first eight or ten years of his life, the mental activity becoming more steady and exact and controlled more and more by reason and purpose, though the sensuous still predominates. Later, reason supported by concepts of his own building and principles of his own discovery, comes to determine his choices; feelings of higher æsthetic and ethical value appear; and the enlightened will becomes the sovereign power.

We are ready now to observe the method of apperception in the growth of the child and its effect upon his character during the school age.

A new period in his development begins with his first school day. Now, instead of finding his way in the sphere of thought guided only by fancy or necessity, ideas are brought before him in an orderly manner and he must exert himself in fixing his attention for a time on one set of related ideas, repelling others. He begins to learn in an orderly way. His concepts are enlarged and corrected and these are associated with others so that his knowledge is extended, his ideas are systematized. Thus the information gained broadens his view and enables him to comprehend more correctly and readily the new ideas that come to him. The exercise of his mental faculties has increased their vigor, strength and critical power. Through this same

process of concept building his æsthetic and ethical natures may be developed and the hitherto hidden beauty of proportion, harmony, and law may be made to brighten his life and refine his character. "The enjoyment of well-mastered knowledge, of æsthetic forms, and of independent thought enlarges the child's idea of happiness." But the enjoyment in itself is not sufficient. It should be a means to a higher end. This higher purpose may be accomplished in part, at least, by bringing him in contact with worthy historical characters. By exercising his moral judgment upon them and measuring his own life by theirs his ethical development is promoted.

Therefore through instruction, resting upon the principle of apperception, the child gradually learns to think independently and becomes less and less subject to control from external forces and mere fancies,- he learns to control and concentrate his ideas,- he is brought into spiritual freedom and through it true culture is attained. Thus we find apperception is the means of gaining both ends sought in school work,- of gaining information and of developing character.

Now the results of apperception, its ease, certainty and strength depend not only on the ideas already in the mind, but also on those presented to it with its accompanying states. Though we consider both classes of ideas as active forces, yet we do not regard them as independent existences, but as instruments used by the soul, that knows, feels and wills in performing its work.

These conditions now properly claim our attention. The requisite condition of the apperceived idea is its recognizable relation to ideas already present in the mind; and the conditions of the apperceiving ideas are that they be active, numerous and wide-reaching, and well organized into generalizations. But whatever the condition of the ideas themselves, if the spirit is depressed or irritated, or prejudice against the new idea exists, apperception is retarded, if not prevented, so great an influence do the emotions have over mental activity. These conditions we will consider further under the subject of interest.

When we observe students, of whatever grade, at their work, if their faces indicate quiet enjoyment, we say "They are interested." Their employment pleases them, and they work without apparent fatigue. Something in it holds the attention without effort on their part; they are free to abandon themselves to the natural movements of their spiritual powers and everything else is subordinated to the all-absorbing pleasure of doing this thing. On examining their work we find it to be something which they feel is related to their own experience in some way. It may be the study of a flower or bird, and, though unfamiliar with this particular kind, past experience gives them enough ideas to make it intelligible, and the object is strange enough to give pleasure by its study. It may be a story appealing to the sympathies through experience, either in fact or imagination.



Or it may be a picture whose growing beauty fascinates them. But let the subject be beyond their easy comprehension or recognized relation and note the listless movement, the dull expression,- the lack of interest. Hence a new idea which arouses interest fulfills the condition requisite for apperception. Its ability to arouse interest, however, depends upon the ideas present and active in the mind. And the state of the mind itself requisite to apperception is termed interest.

There may be, then, a natural inclination of the mind to find pleasure in contemplating a subject, and an attractiveness in the object itself for the mind. Its activity is aroused and preserved by the pleasure afforded and by the desire for further acquaintance with the object. Thus the store of knowledge is fixed, not merely in the memory, but as a part of the mental and emotional experience. The spiritual nature is able now to apperceive things more fully and correctly, while the feeling of success gives courage and self-confidence, thus securing further effort, and higher attainment. Truly interest implies the presence of all of the conditions for apperception.

We have seen that children, especially, live in the concrete world of fact, hence "a live interest springs most easily out of knowledge subjects like history and natural science," and strongest of these "are the interests of humanity. The concern felt for others is based upon our interest in them individually and is sympathetic." To this sympathy the story, the novel and the drama appeal, hence

their power to fascinate.

Nor does interest detract from mental vigor and growth (as some seem to fear) by increasing the pleasure of progress; for the obstacles of learning are not removed. The mind can acquire only through its own activity; but interest has furnished a correct and powerful motive, thus increasing the liveliness of its movements.

It is not sufficient, however, that a deep interest be aroused in one or a few subjects; but it must be wide-reaching and many-sided to secure against narrowness and to aid apperception most efficiently. For vigorous thinking depends upon three things: first, the activity of the individual ideas; second, the number and variety of ideas under control; and third, their union and harmony. The first of these we see results from a direct interest; the second (the number and variety under control) is secured by a many-sided interest, while the third (their union) depends upon both the direct and many-sided interest. Thus interest is seen to be a result of apperception and a requisite condition for further assimilation.

But all subjects are not equally interesting to any person. The child is not interested in the affairs of state, in logic, or philosophy, nor is the uncultivated man attracted by the higher forms of music, art, or poetry. Again, one unacquainted with the works of Goethe and Shakespeare is not interested in a discussion of the relative merits of the two. Hence the subject matter must be adapted

to the age, condition, and previous knowledge of the pupil in order to interest him,- in order to fulfill the first condition requisite for apperception.

From the foregoing discussion of apperception it is evident that active and correct apperception is the method by which the soul comes into "correspondence with its environment",- or, lives. Hence the more active the mind,- the more correct and complete the apperception,- the fuller and more perfect will be the life. The greatest blessing, then, that the school can bestow upon the pupil is to so arrange its course and adapt its methods of instruction that he may come into full and complete correspondence with his surroundings.

In determining the school course, the steadily changing conditions of the child's faculties and his limited yet increasing knowledge must ever be kept in mind. And further, "It is not only a matter of concern that something be apperceived, but that it shall take place with the greatest possible mental culture, with certainty, and without unnecessary expenditure of power." "Out of the whole field of learning only those materials of culture and knowledge are to be selected which are adapted to the child's temporary stage of apperception." # In general, such material should be offered to the pupil for whose thorough assimilation the most favorable conditions are present or easy to create.

The consideration of four things will go far toward arranging



the course according to this general principle. The first of these four is that the material shall lie as close as possible to the child's experience in general,- be as far as possible national. Without this mental culture cannot result.

The second condition is that the studies, in content and form, must take into consideration the characteristics of the pupil's stage of development, and thus make apperception certain.

The third condition deals with the arrangement of topics so that each shall create numerous and strong aids to apperception for the next topic. The application of this third principle results in economy of time and energy.

The fourth requisite is the correlation of studies so that they will aid and strengthen each other, and thus unity of thought may follow.

While, in theory it is necessary to consider all of the above names principles, <sup>#</sup> it is not possible, as yet, to do so in practice. But two things are essential. Regard must be had for the child's experience and for his stage of development.

Let us consider more fully the second requirement, namely, the characteristics of the child's development. It has long been held by some of the best minds that each individual passes through the same general stages of development that the race has passed through. Goethe puts it thus:- "Childhood must always begin again at the first

# (These four principles are practically those laid down by Lange.) (20)

and pass through the epochs of the world's culture." And Ziller says, "The mental development of the child corresponds in general to the chief phases in the development of his people or mankind. The mind development of the child therefore cannot be better furthered than when he receives his mental nourishment from the general development of culture as it is laid down in literature and history. Every pupil should accordingly pass successively through each of the chief epochs of the general mental development of mankind suitable to his stage of advancement." If this psycho-genetic theory is true (namely that the mental and moral development of the individual is but an abridgment of that growth in the race history), we have the key to the natural process of development in the individual and also to the content and arrangement of material, appropriate to school work.

That men such as Goethe, Ziller, Herbart, and others who have an equal claim upon our confidence, believe this theory to be true is strong evidence in its favor. The proof, however, will be found in studying the mind at different periods of life; determining the character of its content and activity; and comparing these with the characteristics of the same in the history of the race. If they agree in general we must conclude that the theory rests on fact.

We have already seen that the little people everywhere live essentially in the concrete world. Yet they calmly disregard many physical conditions and natural laws such as those of time, space

and locomotion. For them trees and flowers, even sticks and stones, are endowed with the powers of thought and speech. Dogs, horses, cats and birds are only people in different dress. Mental activity is marked, but it is the lighter work of fancy and incomplete generalization. Reason has little weight, as yet, except in an evident relation to their sensuous nature, and moral ideas are derived from parents and teachers who are to them the personification of virtue.

A few years later another class of ideas predominates. How physical strength and courage, heroism, honor, and adventure, together with a spirit of investigation are among the prominent features of the spiritual life; while more scientific methods of thought, abstract reasoning, and an appreciation of the finer qualities of character and art belong to later years.

Turning now to history and literature we find the same general characteristics prevailing in corresponding periods of the progress of the race. The legends and fairy tales embody essentially the characteristics of the little child dealing with the same subjects that he deals with, treating them in the same way, and breathing the same spirit.

The story of Ulysses, representing the heroic age, deals with subjects of physical strength and courage, and is pervaded by the spirit of adventure. Natural laws are recognized more fully though they are not yet strictly observed. This condition is exhibited in

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the wonderful achievements and supernatural elements of the story. Much the same might be said of William Tell, Horatius at the Bridge, and others.

The transition from the heroic to the scientific spirit is illustrated in the literature of the historic age. The "Culture Epochs Theory," then, appears to be founded on fact as exhibited in the correspondence of the literature of the different periods to the spirit and characteristics of the individual.

The conclusion, therefore, is that the "Culture Epochs Theory" furnishes one of the leading principles in the selection of material for school work since it gives the key to the adaptation of material to the age and spirit of the pupil, thus making its apperception most fruitful of culture, most economical, and most certain.

The requirements, that apperception should take place with the least possible expenditure of power, with the greatest mental culture and with certainty, control the method of presentation as well as the selection of material.

A few principles of instruction may be noted as universal. Apperception, we know, demands the mental activity of the pupil. Hence much of the teacher's skill depends upon his ability to awaken and sustain this activity in connection with the subject in hand, keeping the thought and attention directed toward the particular aim of the lesson and its bearing on the whole subject.

A second requirement is that the thought be continuous. A sudden change of thought or too great a spring from one to another in the same line destroys its unity and checks the mind's activity.

A third requisite is that a happy, cheerful spirit be maintained. Otherwise inactivity is likely to result, so intense and persistent is the influence of feeling upon mental action.

Now as to the order of presentation. We have already noted that knowledge is the result of human observation or experience, followed by thought. This was the only method the race had for gaining information, children employ it, and even older people advance from the individual to the generalization (the concept). In reality this is the only method since the generalization cannot be understood without first having understood the separate individual ideas for which it stands. As Kant puts it, "General notions (concepts) without sense precepts are empty."

To illustrate,- the concept style in literature means nothing to one who has never noted the different methods of expression employed. But when he has observed that some authors use simple words and sentences, so arranged that the thought is easily seen; while others tell the same thing just as accurately, but in such a way as to require close thinking, he concludes that one may express himself simply and clearly or in the opposite way. When he has noticed that one employs very few words to express his thought exactly and another

uses a great many to say the same thing, he learns that one may be concise or verbose. And when he has seen that one confines himself to a few expressions, while another varies his words and sentences so as to give a pleasing effect, he perceives that even expression of thought may be attractive or commonplace. When these things have been noted and associated, he sees that all relate to the manner of expression and he has the concept style.

Hence the natural, and the most effective and economical method of instruction is inductive.

Speaking in this connection of the use of object lessons Dr. C. A. McMurry says, "Interest in every study is awakened and constantly reinforced by an appeal not to books but to life.-- Of the six great sources of interest (Herbart) three, the empirical, the aesthetic, and the sympathetic deal entirely with concrete objects or individuals, while even the speculative and social interests are often based directly upon particular persons or phenomena. In addition to this it may be said that the interests of children are overwhelmingly with the concrete and imaginative phases of every subject and only secondarily with general truths and laws. The latter are of greater concern to older children and adults. Object lessons, therefore, contain the life-giving element that should enter into every subject of study." As already illustrated, object lessons also furnish the stock of ideas from which principles are derived.

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From the above it becomes evident that the lower grade work must consist, largely, in observing facts and objects. It is also evident that each subject or topic should be commenced in the same way. Classification and generalization come later.

Thus the inductive method of instruction is seen to be the correct one, since it is in harmony with the child's process of learning, increases the certainty of assimilation, and economizes the pupil's energy. Again, concepts are the conclusions reached by observing facts followed by their association and classification; while the utility of the conclusions is secured by applying them. Hence the teacher's method should involve these five operations. In teaching each topic or lesson unit the process will lead through a series of five formal steps, namely: "presentation, preparation, comparison, generalization and application."

Since related ideas must be ready to receive the new, the preparation for a lesson requires that all the apperceiving ideas possible be recalled. Also a definite statement of an aim for the lesson is an important part of the first step. This aim should be put in a concrete and attractive form, giving the pupil a distinct end to work for and the feeling that something has been accomplished by his exertions.

During the presentation pleasing and suggestive, though not direct, questions help to keep the mind busy, leading to full and

complete apperception.

When the pupils have observed and associated enough facts (of a particular kind) from which a conclusion can properly be drawn, these facts should be compared and a generalization made. The value of the third and fourth steps lies in the condensation of the mental store and in making it manageable. What hitherto was isolated facts is now raised to the dignity of a principle and made serviceable in judging and arranging other ideas.

The fifth step is that of applying the knowledge gained. In this way it is secured in the mind and, as a result, it is more easily recalled. Since the application is not very apt to be made by the pupil, this is an important part of the teacher's work.

In the principle of apperception therefore we find the only means of making information a permanent possession of the student. Through it the faculties are exercised and ideas, which largely determine choice and action, are gained. Hence the principle of apperception furnishes the means of storing the mind with knowledge and determines the conditions for the development of character. The other element of character formation, namely, choice, has been most wisely secured to the individual alone, and the educator's responsibility and part in character formation are limited to providing the conditions best adapted to the pupil's development. Yet in view of the incalculable influence conditions have upon choice we conclude that

the recognition and application of the principle of apperception is imperative with the educator in his work of fitting young people for the responsibilities and obligations of mature years.

### LITERATURE.

The third division of the subject, namely, literature, will be discussed under the topics of the function and relation of literature to the public school and of the application of apperception to literature in the public school.

In considering the first topic we will glance back a moment and review the results to be sought in public school work. These results were two,- information and a symmetrical character. It was also observed that that character is, largely, the result of ideas. And under apperception we saw that the emotions play a very important part in the assimilation of ideas, furnishing the motives for action. Therefore the cultivation of the emotional nature is essential to character formation.

Turning now for a moment to observe the people around us and noting their habits of thought, nothing seems more pathetic than the tendency to utilitarian and materialistic views of life. Of such persons it may well be said that, "That self-consciousness by which



all operations of brain and heart are vitalized into a new and finer meaning, is shut away from them through their want of sensibility." And the question naturally comes, What can the school do to remedy this evil,- to lift the men and women of the future to nobler views, to higher enjoyments, and to more refinement of sensibility and character? Through what means can this end be accomplished, where in the school work does the emotional element predominate? The formal studies certainly are not calculated to accomplish this result since they inspire nothing warmer than an interest in the relation and expression of ideas.

Natural history is more promising. But nature in the laboratory is very different from nature in the field and wood. In the former, the student views the bird as a wonderful piece of mechanism or as one of a series of animals. He thinks of its anatomy, the functions of its organs, or its rank in nature, rather than of the perfect, pretty, living, little creature that flits from bough to bough, cheering and brightening his life by its dainty ways or its sweet, happy song. However useful or necessary this study and analysis may be, its effect is rather to increase than to check the inclination to view things from their material side.

Turning now to the third class of studies, namely, literature, we discover what we seek; for it gives us emotions as well as ideas. "Through it we learn to feel, to feel through the whole scale of emo-

tion, from soul to verbal form." And "Whatever stimulates a refined joy--stirs the imagination and keeps it abreast with clear sound--is literature's contribution to human progress." Even the mere contact with beauty is more purifying and elevating than most things in the world. "No slight part of its (literature's) profit rests in the refining influence of its pure loveliness and in the pleasure which its sweetness and art may add to our lives."

As to the effect of literature upon moral character, since religious teaching is excluded from our schools the cultivation of the highest emotional life and the most powerful element in character formation (the religious) is outside the range of school work. Yet, "Surely out of an intimacy of mind and heart with those who have drawn the most thought, feeling, and beauty out of life, the fruit of a happier and better character can hardly fail to be born."

The function, then, of literature is to expand, refine and satisfy the emotional nature. Literature therefore more than anything else is the means of realizing the purpose of life, so well expressed by a line of Matthew Arnold's,-

"Think clear, feel deep, bear fruit well."

In this discussion we have been thinking only of De Quincy's "Literature of Power," including not only poetry and fiction, but also biography and history. We have seen that it is not to be regarded merely as an accomplishment suited to leisure hours, but should be a

part of the regular course in order to fit for the serious duties of life and elevate those duties above mere drudgery. And, hardly a more convincing evidence of progress in educational work can be found than that this fact is being recognized. Serious thought and effort are now being directed toward the adaptation and arrangement of literature for public school work, making it a part of the entire course from the primary grades through the high school.

The wisdom of putting it into the lower grades is apparent when we remember that the majority of our young people never enter the high school. Even if they do, since the formative period for taste and character is between the ages of six and fifteen, their habits are pretty well established, ere they reach the high school.

The boys and girls ought to have, and if they are wide awake, they will have something interesting to read. Their inability to discriminate between the good and the bad is exhibited in the quantities of unwholesome, even vile, stuff passing for literature, which they consume. This fact alone is sufficient to arouse the most indifferent to the danger threatening the future of, not a few, but many of the American youth unless in the school they learn to discriminate and go forth with a well established taste for good literature. The safety of the institutions he loves and honors; the pride in human progress; the value of a single character; and the sacredness of the trust reposed in him must make the thoughtful,



earnest educator pause and consider well his work, especially that part which deals with the taste for good literature, as a protection against the influence of the dime novel and the Saturday Night.

The tests of good literature are three, the first and second having to do with the content and the third with its form. The first test has to do with its moral tone. And we ask, "Are the sentiments expressed worthy?" "Is the atmosphere wholesome and invigorating?" Next, "Does it tell something worth knowing, either as simple fact or for its very beauty?" And the last test, - "Is it in good English, clearly, simply, and elegantly expressed?"

Now classical literature lives because it fulfills these requirements, and especially because there is in it an element that corresponds to the higher spiritual nature of mankind, - a universal truth for all people and all time. For spiritual truth is not dependent upon its physical setting, and remains such regardless of the latter; witness the fairy tales, myths, and legends; the beautiful, humorous, and sinewy poetry of Chaucer, - witness also the great dramas with their impossible scenes. And the higher spiritual sense, if not dulled by materialism, recognizes and appropriates the subtler spiritual truth, disregarding the fallacies of temporal and local circumstances or natural phenomena.

This character of universality in truth is a unifying force in society, bringing men into closer sympathy of thought and feeling.

The perusal of such literature confers a lasting benefit; for, though the form may be adapted to the child, yet the thought is worthy of a permanent place in the mind. And a knowledge of it is essential to an appreciation of the higher thought of the day. Thus both time and energy are economized by reading classical literature. It is also especially adapted to the formation of a taste for wholesome literature, since its character is unimpeachable and both its thought content and its expression cultivate the aesthetic taste. Having feasted on this manna, children are not likely to turn to the husks of trashy literature. The classics, then, are especially appropriate for the public school, since they reveal universal truth, tend to unify society, are essential to a broad culture, and are suited to forming a correct literary taste.

However, Ruskin was right when he divided good books into "good books for the hour and good books for all time." The taste for the former, therefore, as well as for the latter is included in the taste for good literature. Hence such books as "Seven Little Sisters," "Little Lord Fauntleroy" and "Black Beauty," while not strictly classical, are appropriately put in the hands of the public school pupils.

Under the topic of the application of apperception to literature we will consider, first, the arrangement of the course, and, second, the method of presentation as determined by principles already cited.

In the discussion of the course under apperception, four princi-

ples were named, two of which were essential and the others important. The first is that the material shall lie as close as possible to the child's experience,- be national. Now by reason of the late origin of our nation and the fact that our literature is not three quarters of a century old, we cannot hope to find sufficient appropriate literature among the productions of our own authors. However, much that is appropriate can be found here and should be utilized. Its spirit and methods are more in harmony with the child's surroundings and habits of thought than the works of foreign authors. And, further, since an American tone is given by our own authors and American views are imbibed from them, American literature becomes a means of unifying the heterogeneous elements of our society and cultivating a national spirit in the children, thus increasing the future strength and unity of the state.

In applying the second principle, namely, that the material must be adapted in content and form to the child's stage of development, great assistance is rendered by the culture epochs theory. Yet theory alone is not sufficient. The test will come in experiment. This principle will be more fully discussed later on.

The third principle is concerned with the arrangement of the topics so that each shall provide numerous and strong apperceiving ideas for the next. This principle, though essential in theory, is subordinate to the first and second. And except in regard to form, it



is required less perhaps in arranging the course in literature than that of any other branch. Nothing, however, should be given whose form or expression is much beyond the child's experience. When this occurs his interest flags and discouragement follows, from failure to understand; yet progress requires that new words and expressions should be met and that more abstract thought and deeper feeling should be required as the course advances, preparatory for still higher literary work.

As to literary form, in general, prose is more easily comprehended than poetry, yet the rhythm and attractiveness of poetic form enables the mind to dwell with greater intensity upon the subject, thus securing its apperception and cultivating the aesthetic taste. Therefore either, so long as it is simple and clear, may be given even in the lower grades. In either the narrative or description is simpler than other forms of expression and the work in the lower grades should be confined to them. More depth and variety of thought should be required in the stories of each successive grade, thus preparation would be made for more abstract thought of the upper grades work where essays and discourses may be added to the stories.

The fourth and last requirement is that the studies shall be correlated so as to mutually supplement each other. The object of this paper is not to discuss the entire course, but that in literature only. Hence this topic will not be discussed here further than to

say that, since history and literature are but different phases of the same subject, they must be united or at least run parallel.

Having discussed the principles to be applied in selection of material, we will turn our attention to some of the available material in order to determine what is appropriate for the different grades, below the high school.

In discussing the culture epochs theory it was observed that the literature of the race in its childhood corresponded to the thought and expression of little children. Fairy tales, fables and the simpler Bible stories are some of this literature and therefore (theoretically) adapted in spirit to the little people. Experience goes to show that the children enjoy them, hence, so far as the spirit of the content is concerned, they are appropriate to the first three grades of school work.

Not all of the fairy tales, however, will secure the best moral culture. Those in which evil is triumphant, cruelty appears, or anything that awakens fear is present must be excluded. So also the fables, being of oriental origin, breathe the spirit of despotism and consequent restiveness under misfortune. They, too, must be carefully culled in order to give only that which is good. For here the moral culture comes through truth expressed in the concrete form. The child imbibes the spirit of the story, whose sweetness and purity finding lodgment in the mind and heart, mould the thought, and stamp

the life with its character.

Not any of these stories or fables originated in the early history of our own nation, and only part has been prepared by American authors. We are indebted to the Grimm brothers and Hans Christian Andersen for the benefit they have conferred on the little ones through their excellent collections of fairy tales. Our own Miss Nullock has contributed, "The Little Lamé Prince", - a gem in thought and expression. These with "Scudder's Fables and Folk-Lore" are sufficient for imaginative literature in the first three years' work.

The tendency, however, might be to cultivate, unduly, the imagination and a disregard for natural law. In Robison Crusoe may be found a corrective for this tendency in the hero's constant contact with the material world and limitation by its laws. Another book of the hour appropriate for these grades is "Five Little Peppers." Here, too, the moral tone is pure and the effect wholesome.

During the next few years the adventurous and heroic spirit predominates. Military prowess, conquest, and feats of strength are themes of especial interest. Myths and legends embody these characteristics, and those of Greece and Rome being most widely known and most frequently alluded to are among the most valuable. "Wonder Book" and "Tangle Wood Tales" contain these myths freed from all repulsive and harmful elements and told in Hawthorne's own beautiful and fascinating style; the "Odyssey" as given by Church; Lowell's



"Jason's Quest;" and Kingsley's "Water Babies" set the wings of fancy free. The love of adventure and admiration of courage and heroism are gratified in "William Tell," "Horatius at the Bridge," and the "Iliad." Other reading appropriate to the fourth and fifth grades are "The King of the Golden River," "Greek Heroes," and "Hiawatha;" and of the more realistic nature,- "Five Little Peppers," "Midway," "Little Lord Fauntleroy," "Black Beauty," and "Magna Charta Stories."

By these courage, loyalty to parents and country, unselfishness and kindness are instilled, and the effect of both thought and style are seen in the distaste for inferior literature.

Though but few of these subjects are in any way connected with our own history, yet of the authors we number Hawthorne, Longfellow, Church and Lowell among our own; and among the English are Kingsley, Macaulay, and Ruskin.

The second requirement is complied with, in theory, by the correspondence of the literature to the child's period of life, and his delight in such literature establishes its fitness.

Also the foundation for later work is laid in the knowledge of the Homeric stories, of Horatius, and of William Tell (while in Hiawatha is found a counteracting influence for the usual attitude toward the Indians).

As to the fourth principle, that of correlation, since the scenes of these stories are laid chiefly in the countries about the

Mediterranean, I see no objection to making the geography work correspond here and then passing over to our own country. From this point onward United States History and Geography are presupposed.

In the sixth and seventh grades material may, with profit, be taken largely from our native literature both prose and poetry. "Miles Standish," "Snow Bound," and "Grand Mother's Story" are among the poems; while in prose (aside from "Stories of Our Country" and other strictly historical stories) Hawthorne still contributes his "Grandfather's Chair," "Biographical Stories," and "The Great Stone Face," Irving adds his "Sketch Book" and "Astoria," and Cooper, "The Hunting of the Deer."

From other sources might be selected, "The Lady of the Lake", - an excellent type of feudal life, exhibiting the boldness and military valor of the age of chivalry, the attractiveness and beauty of which is enhanced by its expression in poetic form. In addition, Dickens, Lamb, Burroughs and others may be drawn upon for pleasing and wholesome prose.

In this material we have both national writers and national subjects to a considerable extent.

The activity and adventurous spirit still prominent in the child together with his awakening social instincts find satisfaction here, while the form is not beyond his powers.

A wider range of thought and strict conformity to natural law

is required. And in the knowledge of conditions and struggles of the early settlers preparation is made for an understanding of later history and literature.

In the last year below the high school, as before, the history work finds much of its material in the writings of our best authors. Fiction, though not so abundant for the period of national life, lends still a considerable aid; while the poets, particularly Whittier, Lowell, and Longfellow, have found these national questions especially inspiring to their pens. In this connection the influence of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" and "The Voices of Freedom" may be discussed with profit both from a historical and from a literary standpoint. At this stage also Webster's ardent patriotism, keen intellect, logical thought and excellent style recommend his speeches to the perusal of young Americans. Some of the other works that may be profitably employed are Lowell's "Vision of Sir Launfaul," "The Sir Roger de Coverley Papers" and "Marmion," while Dickens, Scott, Thackeray and others still increase the list.

With such a course as this, pupils of the eighth grade will have associated with the best authors long enough, will have observed their works sufficiently, and thought their thoughts till they can catch the hidden meaning and enjoy the excellence of literature from a literary standpoint. They will be able to judge of moral and ethical questions, to determine the function of characters in a story,



and to estimate their worth. They can then enjoy the description of a scene for its own sake, appreciate the charm of figures and the excellence of style. To be sure they will not comprehend all the merits of a work, but their literature training has been sufficient for it to become the introduction into that which will be a source of enjoyment and means of culture throughout life.

The application of apperception to the methods of presenting literature remains for our consideration.

In the first and second grades, since the pupils can read but little and oral reading detracts from the charm and lively fancy of the story, let the teacher tell it.

Here as elsewhere the formal steps are to be observed. The preparation for the story may occupy one, or possibly more than one, recitation period, and will consist in calling up the pupils' related ideas, perhaps adding some new facts to his store, and so uniting them as to make the story easily understood. This with the simple and attractive statement of the purpose of the story constitutes the first step, for the entire piece; while the preparation for each day will consist in a review of the previous lesson by the pupils, the recalling and presentation of any facts needful for the present lesson, and the statement of the aim for the day's work.

The presentation consists in telling the story in a simple, pleasing manner, keeping the minds of the pupils active by frequent

questions as to what probably happened, &c.

The association and classification necessarily comes after several facts or incidents of a particular kind have been observed, consequently the fifth step will not be employed much in the first few years unless the facts are taken as types. This will be more likely to happen with the moral than with anything else in these grades. And just here we would say, that, unless the moral can be applied in the spirit of frankness and sympathy, it would better be left to take care of itself.

These formal steps are practically the same throughout the course, the material and method used corresponding to the pupil's stage of advancement. However, the fourth and fifth step will be employed much more in the upper grades than in the lower ones.

When the child begins to read for himself, of necessity, much of the work will be formal reading, but growing less and less so with the decrease of its difficulty, till in the upper grades the time will be better occupied in reading only parts of the work in class and simply discussing the remainder.

At first the pupil will observe both the thought and the expression. The teacher's part will be that of a guide, leading the child to observe the pure and noble sentiment, the happy comparison, the bright and lively fancy and thus inspiring the same in him. The contrast between simplicity of expression and its opposite; between

directness and circumlocution; and between the elegant and the commonplace, will be pointed out. In this way the pupil will learn to appreciate the excellence of good style and to improve his own expression. This part of the work is incidental and will be done as occasion offers. As the pupil's stock of facts and experiences increases these should be associated by comparison and contrast, and conclusions drawn. So also the application of these generalizations will be made in testing and classifying new examples of thought and expression. In the higher grades observation still goes on, the objects here being a character's part in a story, his moral worth, or wisdom, the appropriateness of the expression to the thought, the vividness and beauty of a description, the relation of one part to the remainder, and the effect of the whole.

Throughout the work the interest will be aroused and sustained through sympathy with the characters more than any other single thing. It is this sympathy more than anything<sup>else</sup> that gives vitality and worth to literary work. Through it the pupil learns to enter into the experiences of others, to live in other than his own surroundings for a time, to "rejoice with those that do rejoice and weep with those that weep." His ideas of equity and justice are cleared and established, and filial, fraternal and social obligations become more definite. And we may look forward with the assurance that the application of apperception to literature in the public school, will

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produce more sympathetic, purer, nobler, more refined men and women than are those of the present generation.

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